

# Oakland population is aging and active

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By ALLAN P. ADLER  
Press Metro Editor

Ninety-two-year-old Keitha Grabenstein of Orion Township plays bocce ball every Friday and attends water aerobics classes twice a week.

Joe Lewis, 82, and his wife, Mary, 75, of Independence Township are active in square dancing.

Novi couple Arlon Quigley, 79, and his wife, Peg, 78, are training for the national senior olympics competition in Pittsburgh in June.

And Jackie Renshaw, 67, of

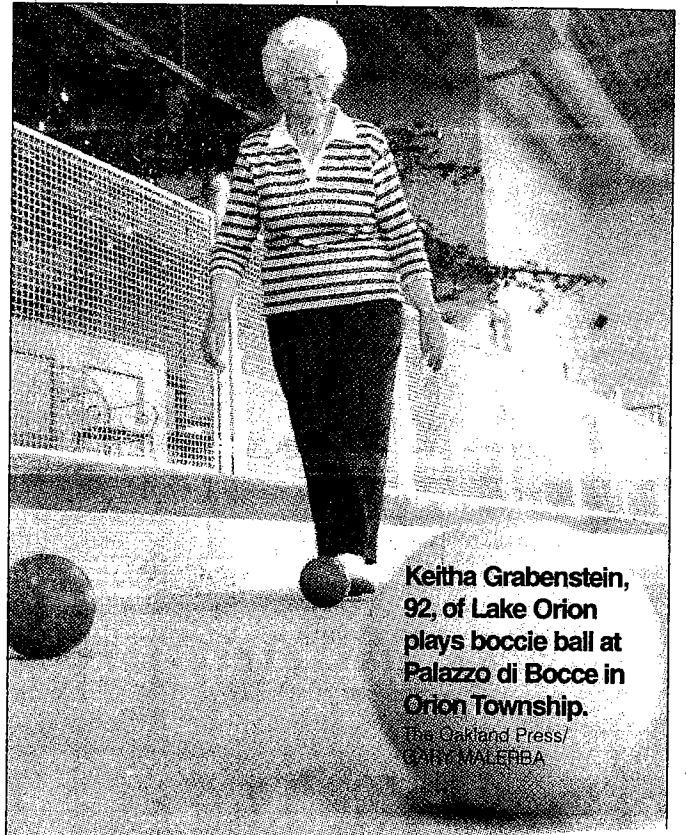
Troy takes an aerobics dance class three times a week and walks 3½ to four miles three other times during the week.

**Housing is critical as baby boomers age, Page A-25**

**Rochester has the Taj Mahal of senior centers, Page A-26**

They are examples of the growing number of senior citizens in Oakland County remaining active later in life — and it's helping them live longer.

PLEASE SEE AGING/A-25



Keitha Grabenstein, 92, of Lake Orion plays bocce ball at Palazzo di Bocce in Orion Township.

The Oakland Press/  
DANNY MALLERBA

# AGING

FROM PAGE A-1

## Staying independent in later years is a top priority for many people

Oakland's average population is aging, statistics show. The percentage of people 65 or older in the county is expected to grow through 2030.

In 2000, 11.3 percent of Oakland's population was 65 or older, according to information from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments. In 2005, the figure had grown to only 11.4 percent, but officials estimate by 2030 the percentage will jump to 20.7.

"We're getting older, and it's going to be important for communities, and the county as a whole, to do a lot of planning," said Kurt Metzger, research director for Wayne State University's Center for Urban Studies.

"Communities are going to have to look towards the kinds of services they're going to offer and the housing they have."

Metzger cited, for example, a number of lofts and town houses being con-

structed with steep stairs in many areas.

"The deep stairways are fine if you're active, single and young, but how will that serve the older adults?" he asked.

Jim McGuire, director of planning and advocacy for the Area Agency on Aging 1-B, based in Southfield, said the agency deals with senior citizens in all types of physical condition. The nonprofit agency offers services to more than 435,000 seniors in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw counties.

Keeping seniors independent is a top priority, McGuire said, especially as the large baby boomer population ages. This group generally includes people born after World War II from 1946 to 1964.

"We are looking most carefully at the increasing need for long-term care and supportive services that will reflect the (senior citizen's) desire to remain living independently," McGuire said. "However, our long-term care system is absolutely unprepared to deal with any increase in the aging population."

One program that has helped keep seniors independent but is underused and underfunded, McGuire

## Population getting older and larger

### SEMCOG POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR OAKLAND COUNTY

Year	Total population	Population 65 and over	Percentage
2005	1,225,336	139,748	11.4
2010	1,254,380	154,395	12.3
2015	1,281,557	179,966	14.0
2020	1,299,528	213,555	16.4
2025	1,318,551	248,592	18.9
2030	1,333,573	275,469	20.7

said, is the state's MIChoice program.

Federally funded under Medicaid, the program cares for people in their homes instead of in nursing facilities, McGuire explained.

Recent figures show the average expenditure for a person in the MIChoice program was \$39 per day, he said. Medicaid payments for people in nursing homes average \$109 per person per day.

McGuire said that in Michigan, about 31,000 to 32,000 people are being supported by Medicaid in nursing homes and only about 6,000 to 7,000 in the MIChoice program.

"There will be people who can be cared for most effectively in a nursing home," he conceded, adding, "But we just can't afford to have this emphasis on the more

costly institutional setting.

"We can care for a lot of people well and less costly in their home."

Staying independent in later years is a top priority for many people, and being active helps keep people healthier and living in their own homes.

Grabenstein, whose husband died in 1976, has two grown children and five grandchildren. She lives in a back apartment in her daughter's home but comes and goes as she pleases.

"I do keep busy here, and I like to get out and around," the retired Sears sales clerk said. "It's being with people and meeting people. I've always been with people, working in the store so many years. I've taken a lot of trips, and I like gardening."

She also still drives.

"I'd feel depressed if my wheels were taken away from me," Grabenstein said. "Of course, my daughter and son are nearby. But I like my independence — I've always been independent."

The Lewises express similar feelings.

They square-dance twice a month in the fall and winter, in the Clarkston and Waterford areas.

In the summer, they take their travel-trailer and go camping up north.

"I think that the main reason I (square-dance) is to keep active and to exercise," said Joe Lewis. "It's just fun. You kind of forget about everything else when you're dancing."

Although not necessarily "athletes" when they were younger, the Quigleys, both in their second marriages, have turned to athletics as their way of remaining healthy.

Peg Quigley likes cycling in the senior olympics and has participated in 5K and 10K competitions.

Arlon Quigley competes in badminton and swimming events.

They admit they purposefully became more active about 17 years ago.

"It's because you feel much better," Peg Quigley

explained. "You feel active and you can get up and do things. If you don't stay active, you're going to sit in a chair and go downhill. If you don't stay active, your muscles will deteriorate."

"You have to use your brain and your muscles to enjoy a good life."

Renshaw, a retired kindergarten teacher, also stays busy as a volunteer.

She is on the board of trustees of the Kingsbury School in Oxford and also is a substitute teacher there.

Her husband, Lew, 75, recently had bypass surgery, so his activity is reduced, but he still likes to walk and do water aerobics.

They both are caring for aging parents. Lew Renshaw's mother is going on 97 and still lives alone a couple of blocks from the Renshaw home.

Jackie Renshaw's parents, ages 84 and 87, also live in Troy and are in their own home.

"I enjoy all of these things, and I know it's healthy for me," she said.

"Since I've retired, I've been more physically active, and I need to have physical activities. Also, I just have a lot of interests."

# Exercise helps improve health

By ALLAN P. ADLER  
Press Metro Editor

A combination of healthful living and medical advancements is being credited with helping people live longer.

Despite Michigan's dubious distinction of being one of the most overweight states in the nation, life expectancy is rising, said Dr. Michael Maddens, director of the division of geriatric medicine at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak.

One of the reasons is exercise, he said.

"We've gotten people to move a little more and exercise can help fight the adverse affects of being overweight," Maddens said. "Being a little overweight in seniors isn't as big an issue as in middle-aged people

and younger, and yet, exercise remains helpful, and may be even more important for seniors."

The appropriate amount and type of exercise depends on the individual, his or her health and age, Maddens said.

"Different exercises have different benefits," he said. "Aerobics is good for the heart rate. Resistance exercises or weight lifting can actually build muscle and bone, even in older people."

Maddens said one study showed that a group of people in their 90s who took a weight-training class for 12 weeks boosted their muscle mass by 10 percent to 15 percent and their strength by 90 percent to 115 percent.

The physician said almost any type of exercise helps improve health.

For example, people in a

nursing home may benefit just from a little walking.

"Most of us, fortunately, are not so frail that just walking to the bathroom gives us exercise training," Maddens said, adding that formal exercise programs are good, but almost any kind of activity is productive.

"If you're a master athlete, you will get the most benefit out of exercising, but if you walk every day, you can get 60 to 70 percent of the benefits of being, say, a marathon runner," Maddens said. "For the average senior citizen, just getting out and doing a half-hour walk will be good exercise."

Exercise also helps seniors stay independent.

"People who exercise are in a better mood, have stronger bones and are less likely to have a fracture if they fall because they have

thicker muscles and thicker bones," Maddens said, noting that falls are one of the most common causes of debilitating fractures that can steal a person's independence.

Too much exercise can hurt anyone — you could sprain a muscle, for example — he said, adding there is a point when a person has obtained the maximum benefits of exercise.

He advises people to get enough exercise to get a substantial benefit from it.

"Most people can do that with a half-hour to an hour a day exercise," Maddens said. "Some exercise may come in another form. (A good exercise program could be) gardening or cleaning the house a couple days a week, plus three days a week of a disciplined regimen."

FROM PAGE ONE

# Housing demand critical for seniors

By LARA MOSSA  
Of The Oakland Press

Ruth Turner, 74, pays \$1,345 for her two-bedroom apartment in Southfield. As for amenities, she receives transportation to local venues, activities with other senior citizens, exercise equipment and computers.

But Turner hopes to trade her rent check for a mortgage payment.

"When you first see them, you're so excited about them," she said of the apartments. "You just want to rent right away. But you have to stop and think."

Her American House apartment complex is converting some of its units into condominiums to meet a growing demand in the senior citizen housing market.

Turner is exploring the chance to grow some equity and receive a tax break on her housing. American House implemented the program this month at eight of its locations and will continue converting apartments to meet demand.

"The baby boomer generation, the seniors we're coming across now, the demands have changed," said Robert Gillette, vice president of community development and marketing for American House Senior Living Residences. "Half the population does not have any interest in renting. Renting, to them, is throwing money away."

While condo living is becoming more popular, it is just one option in a continuum of services for senior citizens.

Independent and assisted-living apartments are prevalent, as well as in-home and long-term care programs.

As the elderly population



The Oakland Press/JOSE JUAREZ

**Ruth Turner relaxes on her apartment balcony in Southfield. Turner hopes to swap apartment rent for a mortgage payment.**

swells because of medical advances and the aging baby boomer generation, the demand for suitable housing becomes critical.

Independent living facilities typically provide social activities, communal dining rooms and transportation. In this format, senior citizens scale back their home maintenance and spend more time with friends.

In assisted-living settings, residents receive help with services such as personal care, housekeeping and meals.

Despite the abundance of assisted-living units in Oakland County, rates are not affordable for many.

The typical older middle-income adult often cannot afford assisted living, said Jim McGuire, director of planning and advocacy for Area Agency on Aging 1-B in Southfield, adding that he considers rent less than \$1,500 a month affordable.

At Waltonwood at Cherry Hill in Canton Township,

assisted living starts at \$3,795 a month.

Subsidized housing is available for low-income senior citizens in larger cities, such as Troy and Madison Heights, but those facilities do not offer assisted-living services.

There is, typically, a waiting list for subsidized apartments, McGuire said. In addition, there are no subsidized senior citizen facilities in northern and western Oakland County, he said.

Singh Development, based in West Bloomfield Township, started building senior citizen apartments in 1989. The company has five properties called Waltonwood, one each in Rochester Hills, Royal Oak and Novi and two in Canton.

Independent and assisted-living units are available, as well as apartments designed for people with memory problems. In the memory care program, the ratio of staff to residents is higher than in assisted liv-

ing, said Jean Brace, director of senior housing for Singh.

To help fill the gaps, Area Agency on Aging 1-B provides some services to low-income senior citizens, such as personal care, housekeeping, lawn cutting and snow removal.

Medicaid, a government-funded program for low-income people, also provides some funding for in-home care. But residence in the state's 400 nursing homes is often the only option for low-income seniors who need assistance.

With occupancy rates above 90 percent, the market for senior citizen housing is growing, said Mike Kahm, vice president of Singh Development. Singh will open another Rochester Hills facility in 2006 and a Sterling Heights building in 2007.

Developers continue to seek better facilities and services for elderly residents.

American House has 1,200-square-foot units with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, full kitchens and stackable washers and dryers.

Heritage Hills has a detached condominium development in Auburn Hills.

And Waltonwood is opening a new facility in Sterling Heights with a therapy pool for aquatic exercise.

For today's active senior citizen, like Turner, the chance for homeownership is a great idea.

"If you get your own place and get a stable mortgage where they won't raise the prices, I think it's beautiful," she said. "I would like to have one, if they do that."

## Oakland County senior centers

Here is a list of the senior centers in Oakland County.

### Addison/Leonard Senior Center

1440 Rochester Road  
Leonard 48367  
(248) 628-3388

### Auburn Hills Senior Center

1827 N. Squirrel Road  
Auburn Hills 48326  
(248) 370-9353

### Berkley Senior Center

2400 Robina  
Berkley 48072  
(248) 546-2450

### BASCC

2121 Midvale  
Birmingham 48009  
(248) 203-5270

### Bloomfield Hills/Greater Bloomfield Senior Association

7273 Wing Lake Road  
Bloomfield Hills 48301  
(248) 341-6450

### Bowen Center: Golden Opportunity Club

52 Bagley St.  
Pontiac 48341  
(248) 857-5723

### Carriage Circle Senior Center

255 Carriage Circle Drive  
Pontiac 48342  
(248) 745-6050

### Clarkston Senior Center

6000 Clarkston  
Clarkston 48348  
(248) 625-8231

### Clawson Senior Center

509 Fisher Court  
Clawson 48017  
(248) 583-6700

### Commerce: Richardson Senior Center

1485 Oakley Park Drive  
Walled Lake 48390  
(248) 926-0063

### Dublin Center

685 Union Lake Road  
White Lake 48386  
(248) 698-3994

### Ewalt Senior Center

1460 N. Perry St.  
Pontiac 48340  
(248) 373-7722

### Farmington Senior Center

28600 Eleven Mile Road  
Farmington Hills 48336  
(248) 473-1822

### Ferndale Senior Center: White Heather

1201 Livernois  
Ferndale 48220  
(248) 544-6767

### Hazel Park Senior Center

620 W. Woodward Heights Blvd.  
Hazel Park 48030  
(248) 546-4093

### Highland Senior Center

209 N. John S.  
P.O. Box 249  
Highland 48357  
(248) 887-1707

### Holly Hock Senior Center

111 College St.  
Holly 48442  
(248) 634-7571

### Howard Dell Senior Center

345 Edison St.  
Pontiac 48342  
(248) 332-5977

### Huntington Woods Senior Center

26325 Scotia  
Huntington Woods 48070  
(248) 541-3030

### Keego Harbor Senior Center

2881 Orchard Lake Road  
Keego Harbor 48320

(248) 681-6172

### La Amistad Latino Senior Center

990 Joslyn  
Pontiac 48340  
(248) 858-2307

### Lake Orion Senior Center

21 E. Church St.  
Lake Orion 48362  
(248) 693-2066

### Madison Heights Senior Center

29448 John R.  
Madison Heights 48071  
(248) 545-3464

### Millford Senior Center

1050 Atlantic St.  
Millford 48361  
(248) 685-9008

### North Hill Farms Senior Center

26 Lantern Lane  
Pontiac 48340  
(248) 334-7500

### Novi Senior Center

25075 Meadowbrook Road  
Novi 48375  
(248) 347-0414

### Oak Park Senior Center

14300 Oak Park Blvd.  
Oak Park 48237  
(248) 691-7577

### Ortonville Senior Center

345 Ball St.  
P.O. Box 929  
Ortonville 48462  
(248) 627-6447

### Oxford Township Veterans Memorial Center

28 N. Washington St.  
Oxford 48371  
(248) 628-9056

### Pearl Wright Senior Center

21075 Wyoming  
Ferndale 48220  
(248) 542-6752

### Rochester OPC

650 Letica Drive  
Rochester 48307  
(248) 656-1403

### Royal Oak Senior Center

3500 Marais  
Royal Oak 48067  
(248) 246-3900

### South Lyon Senior Center

1000 Lafayette  
South Lyon 48178  
(248) 573-8175

### Southfield Senior Adult Center

23450 Civic Center Drive  
Southfield 48034  
(248) 827-0700

### Troy Senior Center

3179 Livernois  
Troy 48063  
(248) 524-3484

### Walled Lake Villa Senior Center

1035 Walled Lake Villa Drive  
Walled Lake 48390  
(248) 669-4590

### Waterford Senior Citizens Center

6455 Harper  
Waterford 48329  
(248) 623-6500

### West Bloomfield Senior Center

4640 Walnut Lake Road  
West Bloomfield 48323  
(248) 738-2500

### Wixom Senior Citizens Center

49045 Pontiac Trail  
Wixom 48393  
(248) 624-2850

### Woodland Heights Senior Center

120 N. Edith  
Pontiac 48342  
(248) 334-3505